

REMARKS

Claims 1-28 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 3, 7 and 19 are amended, and claims 27 and 28 are added. Claims 4-6, 14-16 and 19-26 have been withdrawn by the Examiner. No new matter is added. Reconsideration based on the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 1-3, 7, 12, 17 and 18 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,532,317 to Hanneman and further rejects claim 13 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Hanneman. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the indication in the Office Action that claims 8-11 contain allowable subject matter. Applicant, however, respectfully submits that at least claim 1 from which these claims directly or indirectly depend is allowable for at least the reasons indicated below.

The Office Action asserts that Hanneman discloses a connection structure between optical fibers that includes a base member 28 and a substrate, with a connecting part 32 located on the top surface of the base member 28 to connect optical fibers 29 and 30.

However, Hanneman does not disclose or teach "a cylindrical base member," as recited in claim 1. In fact, the base member disclosed by Hanneman appears to be a large, non-cylindrical surface. Further, Hanneman does not teach or disclose a "cylindrical base member having a diameter smaller than the diameter of the connecting part," as recited in added claim 27, and Hanneman also does not teach a "connecting part contacting the entire upper surface of the cylindrical base member," as recited in added claim 28 (support for the added claims may be found in at least Figs. 1 and 2).

Regarding the §103 rejection, Hanneman does not teach a cylindrical base member. Therefore, Hanneman, either alone or in permissible combination with the art, does not teach all of the elements recited in the pending claims.

For the foregoing reasons, claims 1 and 19 recite features that are patentably distinct from the applied art. Further, the claims depending from claims 1 and 19 are allowable for at least their dependence on claims 1 and 19, as well as for the additional features they recite. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-28 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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